BENGALURU, SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

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Improved access to legal aid and support networks enable women to report dowry-related complaints in city, but expectations linked to lifestyle, status and financial security continue to sustain illegal practice in covert forms

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As a series of dowry-related cases gripped headlines the past few weeks, Bengaluru has emerged as the metropolitan city with the highest number of cases registered under the Dowry Prohibition Act. Activists attribute the trend to a combination of rising consumerism, changing economic conditions, social pressures and growing awareness among women about their legal rights.

According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, the city recorded 878 dowry-related complaints in 2024, accounting for a significant share of cases reported across India's major metropolitan centres.

Women's rights groups and support organisations say the increase in complaints does not necessarily mean dowry-related abuse is more prevalent in Bengaluru than elsewhere. Instead, improved access to legal aid, counselling services, helplines and support networks has enabled more women to report

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

FALL TASK

Just 14 GBA officials managing entire city as tree and branch fall complaints pile up

PAGE 4

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Karnataka to introduce Lesson-Based Assessment for PU students from 2026-27

After successfully implementing the Lesson-Based Assessment (LBA) model in schools, the Department of School Education and Literacy has decided to introduce the system for first- and second-year PU students in government, aided and unaided colleges across Karnataka from the 2026–27 academic year.

A compulsory 30-mark test will be held after every lesson. Colleges must use the department's question bank and upload marks to SATS after evaluation. Principals have been instructed to ensure the timely conduct of assessments, arrange remedial classes based on student performance and regularly inform parents about their children's marks. The department is also planning AI-based evaluation of LBA answer scripts in PM SHRI PU colleges in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Dharwad. However, the PU Lecturers' Association opposed the move, citing an impractical 320:1 student-teacher ratio and an unmanageable 160:1 ratio in practical examinations. — BMB

AI to predict extreme weather

The. Karnataka is set to harness Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to improve the accuracy of weather forecasting and strengthen disaster preparedness. With the state frequently facing droughts, floods, landslides, cyclones, lightning strikes and hailstorms, the government is working to build a technology-driven disaster management system centred on the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC). Rather than relying solely on conventional forecasting models and historical data, authorities plan to use AI-powered analytics and advanced weather intelligence to deliver more accurate predictions and early warnings. The government is also exploring a system to send real-time alerts directly to citizens through mobile network operators.

Officials said Karnataka remains vulnerable to droughts, earthquakes, cyclones, landslides and coastal erosion. The state has introduced warning systems in 104 disaster-prone gram panchayats and established 14 seismic monitoring stations. The proposed AI-backed system is expected to deliver faster and more targeted disaster alerts. — BMB

THINGS TO DO

01 Mango celebration

Ranga Shankara will host its annual Mango Party 2026, bringing together mango lovers for a day of fruit, food, storytelling and community activities. The event will feature sessions by Vasanthi Hariprakash and Sihi Kahi Chandru, along with food stalls, mango delicacies and a curated book collection. Participants are encouraged to bring one kilogram of mangoes per person for the community feast. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: June 7, 11 am to 5 pm**

02 Denim fest returns

Nexus Select Malls in Bengaluru has launched the fourth edition of the Denim & Sneaker Fest with a live concert by Yerd Plate Dose. The festival will feature streetwear collections, sneaker drops, shopping offers, giveaways, live music performances and immersive fashion experiences across the mall. **Where: Nexus Mall, Koramangala; When: Running till June 15**

03 Odissi spectacle

Acclaimed Odissi dancer Madhulita Mohapatra and the Nrityantar Dance Ensemble will present Draupadi's Mahabharata … the epic that began with her. The production reimagines the Mahabharata through Draupadi's perspective, exploring themes of justice, power and consequence through classical dance, expressive abhinaya and theatrical storytelling. **Where: Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield; When: June 7, 3.30 pm to 7.30 pm**

04 Poetry night

Urban Solace will host Tuesdays with the Bard, featuring poet Amlan. The event, recognised in the Limca Book of Records 2016 as India's longest-running poetry event, will be held at Urban Solace. Organisers said Amlan will present original English poems exploring literature and poetic expression. **Where: Urban Solace, Ulsoor; When: June 9, 7.30 pm to 9 pm**

Youngsters lead Environment Day drive

Manipal Hospital Malleswaram marked World Environment Day by organising a sapling plantation drive at Jagadguru Sri Adi Shankaracharya Udyanavana, a park maintained by the hospital opposite its campus. Around 12 children from Tamahar Trust participated in the programme and planted saplings bearing their names. Among those present were Deputy Conservator of Forests N Ravindra Kumar, Hospital Director Abdul Hafeez, Dr GK Prakash, Consultant Nephrologist and Transplant Physician, and Dr Sowbhagya B, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, at Manipal Hospital Malleswaram.

Speaking at the event, Ravindra Kumar said, "Every day is an opportunity to plant and protect nature. Practices such as waste segregation, recycling and the responsible use of resources can help conserve the environment." Abdul Hafeez said the hospital had maintained the park for several years and added, "This year, children participated in planting saplings, and each plant was tagged with the child's name. The initiative connected environmental care with community participation."

Vaishali Pai and Dr Bhaskar Pai, founders and directors of Tamahar Trust, said the children enjoyed the opportunity to plant saplings and follow their growth over time. — BMB

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STUDENTS WAIT TO TAKE CHARGE: Campus democracy may return as policymakers revisit long-shelved representation mechanisms, rekindling debates over youth leadership and participation

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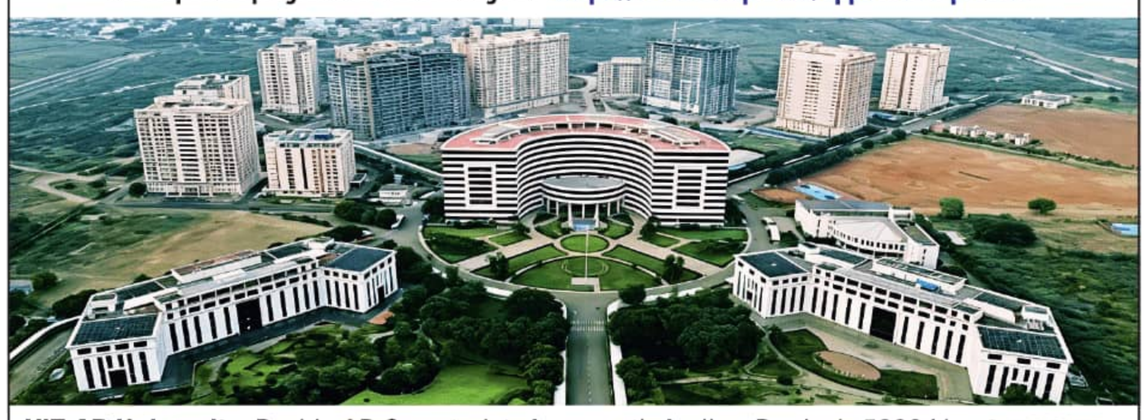

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Mother, live-in partner booked for murder 3 months after girl's death

A five-year-old girl's death in Kadugodi, initially treated as a suspicious case, has now taken a murder turn, with police booking her mother and alleged live-in partner nearly three months after the incident.

The case stems from a complaint filed by Praveen Basappa, pertaining to the death of his five-year-old daughter Vennila, who was found dead on March 25 at a villa in Seegehalli within the jurisdiction of the Kadugodi police station. Based on his complaint, police have registered a case against his estranged wife, Priyanka P, and her alleged partner, Mohan J Mahaningappa.

According to the complaint, Praveen and Priyanka married in 2007 and have two daughters. Praveen alleged that Priyanka renewed a relationship with her college friend Mohan in late 2025 and later moved to Bengaluru to live with him after seeking a divorce. Their younger daughter Vennila stayed with Priyanka, while the elder daughter lived with Praveen. Praveen stated that on March 25 he was informed by Priyanka's brother about Vennila's death. He alleged that Priyanka gave contradictory explanations, claiming at different times that the child had eaten biryani the previous night, and that she had been given ice cream before being left asleep in an air-conditioned car while Priyanka and Mohan attended a birthday celebration.

After obtaining the post-mortem report, Praveen shared it with a relative, a paediatric specialist in the United Kingdom, who reportedly raised suspicions about the death. Praveen subsequently alleged that Vennila may have been assaulted and suffocated.

He further claimed that Priyanka and Mohan planned to start a new life together and were exploring IVF options, alleging that Vennila had become an obstacle. Police said Mohan has been arrested, while Priyanka remains absconding. Police are awaiting the FSL report and expert opinions. Further investigation is underway. **–BMB**

CRIME FILES

2-wheeler rider dies in crash

A 27-year-old private company employee was killed in a road accident after a car knocked his two-wheeler and it crashed into a tree within the Chikkabanavara Traffic Police Station limits on Friday around 10.30 pm.

The deceased has been identified as Narasimhamurthy, a private factory employee and resident of Banaswadi. According to police, Narasimhamurthy was riding his two-wheeler when a car allegedly hit his vehicle. Due to the impact and speed, he lost control, veered off the road, first hitting a rock and then crashing into a roadside tree.

The impact of the collision was severe, resulting in his death on the spot. **–BMB**

Treefall surge exposes severe forest cell staff crunch crisis

With only 14 officials handling thousands of emergencies, delayed response and weakened monitoring are raising public concerns every single day

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Amid rising incidents of tree and branch falls, staff strength in the Forest Cell of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) continues to decline.

Currently, the department has only 14 officials manning the entire city, after a couple of recent transfers under the Transfer Counselling Management System. The department is stretched with workload, and the new staff proposal still awaits the required approvals. "The department is currently managing with only 14 staff across all five city corporation limits. Although a shortage of staff is a challenge the department has been facing for some time, the number has recently dwindled, making management of day-to-day workload difficult," said a source.

Between April 29 and May 29, more than 3,000 cases of trees and branches falling have been recorded by the Greater Bengaluru Authority. In February, the Forest Cell submitted a staff proposal, stating the need for 55 officials to manage all five corporation limits. The proposal included five assistant conservators of forest (ACFs), two range forest officers (RFOs), and four deputy range forest officers (DRFOs) in each city corporation limit.

A fallen tree blocks a rain-soaked city road, highlighting mounting pressure on the understaffed Forest Cell during monsoon.

According to sources, while there has been an indication to revise the number of staff to 25 instead of 55, there is no clarity on the timeline. "It is likely that the staff strength will be increased to 25, against the old staff strength of 16. This is expected to include 10 deputy range forest officers, 10 range forest officers, and five assistant conservators of forest. However, there is no clarity on when these positions will be filled. Managing the city during monsoon with just 14 pairs of hands-on deck will be difficult," said the source.

Citizens and activists say the impact of an understaffed department is visible on the ground. "Our locality had an incident of tree fall in the recent rainfall episode. While our complaints were registered, there was some delay in clearing the debris. Moreover, an improved staff strength would also ensure a lesser number of trees fall incidents due to better surveillance," said a resident of Pulikeshi Nagar.

Monsoon pressures are testing the city's green management system as vacant posts remain unfilled, leaving residents worried about slower debris clearance, reduced tree surveillance, and growing safety risks

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Water leakage
Nandidurga Cross Road

Persistent Cauvery water leakage from beneath Nandidurga Cross Road near Nascoo Woods Apartment is leading to significant wastage of water.

Economic class no barrier to dowry

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

harassment and seek assistance. Many complaints arise within the first few years of marriage, particularly among women in their twenties and early thirties. Activists note that families often try to resolve disputes by meeting initial demands, only to face fresh demands later.

The nature of dowry demands has also evolved over time. Instead of direct requests for cash, families increasingly seek expensive consumer goods, luxury vehicles, apartments, lavish weddings and costly vacations. In some cases, women are pressured to contribute their salaries or seek financial support from their parents to meet their husband's personal or business expenses.

A woman engaged to be married said her fiancé had repeatedly attempted to secure a car before their wedding. Speaking about the changing nature of dowry demands, she said, "The shift in employment conditions has definitely affected the traditional functioning of dowry. Those who are self-sufficient and hold a high moral value system do not indulge in these behaviours. There are many who seek to portray a lifestyle without having the means to sustain it." She added that her fiancé had recently discontinued a business that had provided an additional source of income for the household and was now unnecessarily relying on her family to fend for him. She noted that many men view dowry in subtle forms as desirable for upward social mobility -- an easy way out. Economic pressures and unemployment are increasingly cited as factors behind dowry-related disputes. Support groups report instances where husbands who have lost jobs or experienced business setbacks seek financial assistance from their wives' families under the guise of supporting new ventures or for maintaining a particular standard of living.

Sociologist Janaki Abraham said the issue of dowry is deeply intertwined with property rights and inheritance practices. "Dowry is fundamentally rooted in property rights as a historical system of inheritance," she explained. According to Abraham, in traditional patrilineal societies, women were systematically excluded from inheriting immovable property such as land. To preserve agricultural estates and prevent fragmentation, property was passed down through the male lineage, while daughters received movable assets including jewellery, cash and household goods at the time of marriage. She noted that these transfers originally served as a financial safety net for women entering a new household. However, over time, what began as a voluntary wealth transfer for a woman's security has devolved into coercive, mandatory financial demands by the groom's family.

"These transfers that served as a financial safety net for women entering a new household have over time devolved into coercive, mandatory financial demands by the groom's family
– Janaki Abraham, sociologist

Abraham also pointed to changing attitudes among women regarding inheritance. "Women are more aware of their rights to natal property now and recognise that they can have equal share with their brothers. This often is a hard conversation to have within the family. In the scenario where a woman knows she cannot have any claim over her natal property, she also often has expectations," she said.

She further observed that wedding expenses have risen sharply in recent years as families seek to emulate luxurious celebrations popularised through social media. According to her, these expectations have contributed to increasing financial pressures surrounding marriage.

Dowry practices are not confined to any one economic class. A government employee and mother of two daughters said the practice remains common even among affluent and highly educated families. "This may seem contradictory as they are likely to have received quality education and are assumed to have high principles. It's an issue of prestige to them, a matter of capability. It is very normalised and made a part of the culture itself," she said, noting that the matter often comes into public view only after serious consequences have been felt by the woman's family.

She also noted that women are increasingly recognising the recurring nature of dowry demands. "Girls now understand that if you agree to their wishes once, they are likely to keep making further demands. They want to avoid the problem as a whole and make better choices," she said.

Activists warn that dowry-related abuse is no longer limited to physical violence. Emotional manipulation, financial control, social isolation and psychological harassment have become increasingly common forms of coercion. Victims often endure these pressures silently for years due to concerns about family honour, social stigma and the financial burden further demands may place on their parents.

Despite legal prohibitions, dowry continues to survive in new and evolving forms. Researchers and activists believe that while overt demands may have become less common in urban settings, expectations linked to lifestyle, status and financial security continue to sustain the practice, making it one of the most persistent social challenges facing Indian society.

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Honking havoc near metro leaves citizens sleepless

Noise pollution from private buses near Rajajinagar Metro Station has become growing health hazard for senior citizens and school children

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c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

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KSPCB plans site visit following residents' noise pollution complaints

Despite a ban on honking near Metro stations, residents living around Namma Metro Station in Rajajinagar continue to face severe noise pollution. With the stretch beneath the Metro station serving as a pick-up point for several private buses, incessant honking has become a nuisance, particularly for senior citizens and children.

Residents have been running from pillar to post seeking relief, but authorities have done little to address the issue. They have approached the traffic police and the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), urging them to impose curbs on honking.

"I am residing at Balaji Aditi apartment. I am a senior citizen. I cannot have a sound sleep at night due to indiscriminate honking. Authorities concerned must take suitable measures to end this menace and help us sleep at night without any disturbance," said Sheshadri Ramachandran.

Expressing concern over the issue, resident Nagakiran Kempnool said the honking starts from 8 pm to 11 pm and again from 4.30 am to 6 or 7 am. "We are not against vehicular movement but could not bear honking. We have already complained to all the authorities, but they are yet to curb this menace which has become not only a health hazard but also a nuisance," said Nagakiran Kempnool.

The residents wrote to the Assistant Commissioner of Police (Traffic), Malleswaram, on February 14, 2026, highlighting the menace of honking and traffic congestion on the Service Road, Chord Road, 20th Main and 14th Cross Road. They demanded deployment of traffic police personnel on the stretch to regulate traffic, but no concrete measures have been taken so far.

> **We are not against vehicular movement but could not bear honking. We have already complained to all the authorities, but they are yet to curb this menace which has become not only a health hazard but also a nuisance**
>
> –Nagakiran Kempnool, resident

Residents said they had also informed the KSPCB Regional Office about noise pollution caused by private buses. "We have been meeting the authorities and submitting letters and videos of private vehicles causing noise pollution. The authorities have not acted against those vehicles that cause noise pollution. We have been suffering a lot all these days due to honking. Authorities must impose curbs on honking," said a resident.

Meanwhile, KSPCB Environmental Officer K Chandrakanthi said she had received a complaint from residents. "I am planning to visit the spot along with my subordinates. I will write a letter to the traffic police after visiting the spot," the environmental officer said.

400-year-old Tamarind Grove gets tourism makeover

Forest Department plans eco-tourism activities and educational programmes at Nallur Tamarind Grove while developing nearby attractions to boost visitor interest

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

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The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) is in the process of turning the Nallur Tamarind Grove in Devanahalli, one of Karnataka's four biodiversity heritage sites, into a sustainable eco-tourism destination.

"The Grove will soon start hosting environment-related events that are organised in government schools. We plan to start small by bringing children and educating them about the biodiversity of the site," said Santosh Kumar G, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bengaluru Rural Division, KFD.

The Grove's restoration, including soil work and fencing, was completed with CSR funding. Despite regular de-weeding efforts, recurring weed growth remains a challenge. Officials are preparing a DPR for developing Kadimanchanahalli Lake with tourism activities. The Lake, Tree Park, and Nallur Tamarind Grove will be combined into a tourism package to support site maintenance.

"There is no other attraction in the vicinity of the Grove. Thus, it will be difficult to initiate and maintain tourism only at the Grove. To get tourists, we need to add more attractions around the Grove. While Kodimanchanahalli Tree Park is close to the Grove, we are in the process of developing Kodimanchanahalli Lake. The Lake has water throughout the year due to the KC Valley project. Thus, we are planning to start boating in the lake as an added tourist attraction," said Kumar.

> **There is no other attraction in the vicinity of the Grove. Thus, it will be difficult to initiate and maintain tourism only at the Grove**
>
> –Santosh Kumar G, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bengaluru Rural Division, KFD

Over 300 ancient tamarind trees thrive at heritage site

The ecologically fragile site is home to more than 300 tamarind trees, some estimated to be around 400 years old, according to a carbon dating study conducted by the University of Agricultural Sciences in 2008.

The department is also seeking CSR funding to appoint a watcher for the upkeep of the Grove. In the absence of CSR support, the project will be funded by the Karnataka Biodiversity Board and revenue generated through trekking activities conducted by KFD.

Consumers seek uniform CNG rates statewide

Motorists are questioning the sharp variation in CNG prices across districts despite the fuel being promoted as an economical and environment-friendly alternative. While CNG costs 95 per kg in Bengaluru, consumers in Belagavi pay 100 per kg, the highest rate in the state. Davanagere records the lowest price at 84 per kg, creating a gap of 16 within Karnataka. Prices also vary across other districts, with Shivamogga, Uttara Kannada, Mandya and Chikkamagaluru charging 91.50 per kg, Ramanagara 85.25 and Tumakuru 87. I ndustry players say CNG prices are determined by gas procurement costs, supply sources, pipeline connectivity, transportation expenses and local distribution networks, resulting in district-wise differences. The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board has granted CNG distribution licences to different companies across Karnataka, including GAIL Gas, Indian Oil, Adani Gas, Maharashtra Natural Gas Limited and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited. However, motorists point out that petrol and diesel prices do not show such large variations despite being supplied by multiple companies. "When CNG is available at lower rates in other districts, it is unfair that Belagavi consumers must pay more. There should be a uniform price across the state," said vehicle owner Shivanand Patil. **–BMB**

Not by rote, learning has new name

Science and Mathematics textbooks for Classes 6, 7 and 8 under the state syllabus have been renamed as part of the new competency-based learning model aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and NCERT's revised curriculum framework. The Kannada-medium Science textbook is now titled 'Kutuhala', while the English version has been named 'Curiosity'. Mathematics textbooks have been renamed 'Ganitha Prakasha'. Officials said the new textbooks feature colourful pages, illustrations, activity-based learning modules and simple experiments using everyday objects, replacing the earlier black-and-white format. New sections such as 'What Do You Think?', 'Safety First', 'Be a Scientist' and 'Our Scientific Heritage' aim to promote exploration and independent problem-solving. Education experts said the books are designed to improve retention and prepare students for advanced scientific learning, but stressed that active teacher participation will be key to successful implementation. **–BMB**

Digital TCs end campus visits

After introducing digital mark sheets through DigiLocker for SSLC and II PUC students on result day for the first time this year, the School Education Department is set to roll out digital Transfer Certificates (TCs). As a pilot initiative, students graduating from government PU colleges will receive digitally generated TCs through DigiLocker, eliminating the need to visit colleges for physical signatures from principals. Using II PUC Exam-2 result data, the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) will auto-generate digital TCs, which students can download from their DigiLocker accounts after results are announced. Officials said the system has been simplified by removing columns related to fee dues, scholarships and attendance records. The digital TC will include the SATS number, exam registration number and APAAR ID for academic verification. Private and repeat students will continue obtaining TCs through the existing college-level application process. **–BMB**

CET results declared, KEA introduces fresh reforms

Over 3.09 lakh candidates appeared for CET, while KEA introduced new counselling measures and technology-driven verification processes

Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil launched the Digital Audio Kiosk, a chatbot system that allows candidates to get instant answers to their queries based on Karnataka Examination Authority data, on Saturday

The results of the Common Entrance Test (CET) 2026 were announced on Saturday. Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanaprakash Patil said the examination was conducted on April 23 and 24 at 745 centres across Karnataka. A total of 3,30,646 candidates had registered for the examination, of whom 3,09,014 appeared. The Kannada Language Test for Horanadu and Gadinadu Kannadiga candidates was conducted on April 22.

Exam process

Addressing the media, Dr Patil said technologies including facial recognition and webcasting were used during the examination process. He thanked the officials and staff involved in conducting the examination. He said 11,51,367 OMR sheets covering all four subjects were uploaded on the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) website within five days of the examination. The minister said the CET 2026 rank list was prepared using the highest marks secured in Exam-1 and Exam-2 of the second-year PU examinations. Marks of Class 12 students from CBSE and CISCE schools were obtained directly from the respective boards and included in rank preparation.

Data verification

Dr Patil said scanners identified around 25,000 candidates who had incorrectly entered details such as registration number, version code, or booklet number on their OMR answer sheets. Some candidates also failed to write their names or sign the sheets. These errors were corrected before results were processed. He said document verification for all candidates was completed before the declaration of results. Verification was conducted online using SATS and Revenue Department data, while unresolved cases were checked through PU colleges. Candidates seeking eligibility under special clauses and reservation categories underwent verification at the KEA office. Option-entry data has also been prepared.

Counselling plans

The minister said counselling for medical courses would be conducted after the announcement of NEET-UG results and according to the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) schedule. Separate counselling will be held for engineering and other professional courses. He said vacant seats in engineering and other courses after medical counselling will be offered in subsequent rounds, with fresh options allowed. Due to delays in NEET-UG results following the re-examination process, KEA has decided to conduct counselling for engineering and other non-medical courses separately.

New measures

The minister said KEA will introduce a pre-round counselling process this year. Candidates satisfied with the seat allotted in the pre-round may join the allotted college or continue to participate in the first round of counselling. He also said candidates allotted seats through both the All India Quota and KEA in the first round of medical admissions will not have to pay a penalty if they choose the All India Quota seat and surrender the KEA seat.

KEA connect

Dr Patil announced the launch of the KEA Connect app, which will enable candidates participating in counselling to interact with students who secured admissions through KEA counselling last year and are currently studying in various colleges. The senior students will provide guidance on counselling and admissions. Participation will be voluntary.

Other initiatives

The minister said the process relating to the medical examination and registration of physically disabled candidates has been modified. Doctors conducting assessments will upload eligibility details directly through a dedicated portal, with the information stored on KEA servers. He added that students from different boards who studied outside Karnataka were provided a facility to enter their marks online. For the first time, examination boards in Maharashtra and Kerala shared Class 12 marks of CET candidates through an API-based system. **BMB**

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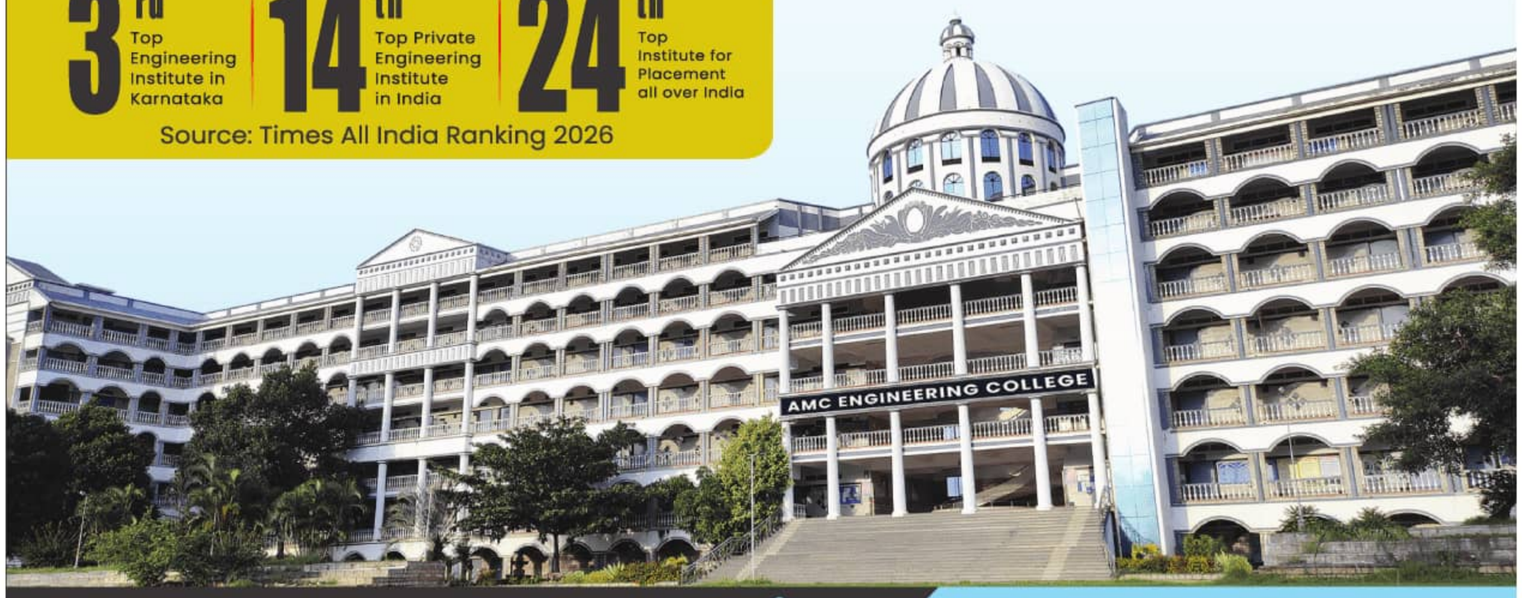

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THE SUNDAY READ

Students wait to take charge

Campus democracy may return as policymakers revisit long-shelved representation mechanisms, rekindling debates over youth leadership and participation

| Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

The Karnataka government, under the leadership of Siddaramaiah, took steps in April towards reviving student union elections in colleges and universities, holding consultations with student organisations to chart the process. At a meeting, officials indicated that the elections would be conducted broadly in line with the recommendations of the JM Lyngdoh Committee, which submitted its report in 2006.

DK Shivakumar's elevation to the position of Chief Minister has further highlighted the need for student union elections to make a comeback. "DK Shivakumar's rise to power began with active participation in student politics through the NSUI. Campus leadership gave him organisational experience, political visibility and grassroots connections, which eventually enabled his transition into electoral politics and his emergence as one of Karnataka's most influential political figures," said a sociology student, calling for the elections to be reinstated at the earliest.

The discussions came shortly after the former Chief Minister signalled the government's intent to reintroduce student body polls across the state. Earlier, the Congress had constituted a committee to examine the feasibility of restoring elections in time for the upcoming academic year.

Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil and Higher Education Minister Dr MC Sudhakar led the consultations, engaging with representatives from student groups, including the Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), National Students' Union of India (NSUI) and Students' Federation of India (SFI). According to an official statement, the government plans to adopt most of the Lyngdoh Committee's framework while making certain adjustments to reflect present-day requirements. The ministers assured participants that a detailed set of guidelines for conducting the elections would be finalised soon.

Student organisations, cutting across political affiliations, pressed for early elections, pointing to the state budget announcement in March that committed to the exercise. Several demands were put forward during the meeting, including reservation for women in student councils and a proposal that a majority of council members should be Kannada-speaking. There were also calls to grant elected student bodies greater authority, including representation in university syndicate meetings.

Akshay from Collective, a student organisation, said the absence of elected bodies has left students without meaningful representation. "Currently, students in Bengaluru colleges have no platform to raise their concerns with the administration. Students from colleges such as SJU, Christ and MCC have reported instances of sexual harassment not being taken seriously, arbitrary fees being collected and moral policing on campus. In some colleges, even basic facilities such as hostel water supply are inconsistent, while bodies such as the ICC and SC/ST Cell are barely functional," he said.

He argued that elected unions could shift the balance of power on campuses. "Student bodies today are reduced to event management committees, with all decisions subject to administrative approval. A union independent of the administration is necessary to ensure student rights and participation in higher education," he added.

Addressing concerns about potential disruptions during elections, Akshay maintained that responsibility lies with institutions to safeguard the process. "The task of a student union is to ensure equal rights and justice for all students. It is the responsibility of the administration to ensure that this democratic process is carried out without disruption by forces that seek to divide students," he said.

On safeguards, he called for reforms within the existing framework. "While elections are based on the Lyngdoh Guidelines, there are shortcomings, such as rules that exclude students based on attendance or academic performance. These need to be revisited. At the same time, any attempts to disrupt democratic processes must be dealt with firmly to ensure a peaceful student democracy," he said.

He also flagged broader structural challenges in implementing elections across campuses. "Administrative overreach, a lack of democratic spaces for student dialogue and increasing surveillance on campuses are key concerns that could affect how elections are conducted," he noted.

Echoing the demand for elected bodies, Aratrika from the All India Students Association (AISA) described student elections as a crucial democratic exercise. "Student union elections are a very important democratic exercise. In the absence of unions, colleges and universities in Karnataka have routinely exploited students. Hopefully, students will be able to democratically elect a pro-student representative to voice their grievances," she said.

Experts say the revival of student elections could significantly reshape campus governance but caution that implementation will be key. A higher education policy analyst noted, "If conducted fairly, student elections can deepen democratic participation and create accountability within institutions. However, the state must ensure that safeguards are in place to prevent excessive politicisation and administrative interference."

Another academic specialising in student politics pointed out that aligning with the Lyngdoh framework is a step forward, but not sufficient on its own. "The guidelines provide a solid foundation, but they need periodic updates to reflect present realities. Issues such as digital campaigning, inclusivity and transparency in funding must also be addressed," the expert said.

The push to revive student elections traces back to a 2006 directive from the Supreme Court, which mandated the implementation of the Lyngdoh Committee's recommendations. The committee laid down a comprehensive framework covering election procedures, candidate eligibility and the need to limit direct political party involvement in campus polls.

Advocates argue elected councils strengthen accountability and collective voice, while observers stress updated safeguards, inclusivity measures and transparent governance structures

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'Misunderstanding' resolved: Surjewala says Ramalinga Reddy has 'withdrawn' his resignation

A day after Karnataka Minister Ramalinga Reddy tendered his resignation, senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Randeep Singh Surjewala on Saturday claimed that the eight-time MLA has "withdrawn" his resignation, potentially ending the uncertainty surrounding his tenure.

Surjewala asserted that it was the result of a productive dialogue between party leaders and Reddy, stating that the earlier friction was merely the product of a "misunderstanding".

"Ramalinga Reddy ji is very important to the Congress party. His experience is invaluable to the party. We spoke to him; there had been some misunderstanding. He has withdrawn his resignation. He will continue to serve as a loyal soldier of the party and as a minister," Surjewala told reporters in a press conference.

Surjewala also took a jibe at Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), claiming that they were looking to capitalise on the situation to destabilise the Congress state unit. "In fact, the BJP is in shock because they thought they could disrupt the smooth transfer of power," he said.

Reddy tendered his resignation just two days after taking oath as the Cabinet Minister in the Chief Minister

DK Shivakumar-led Congress government on June 3, while asserting that he "continues to remain in the Congress party."

CM Shivakumar earlier today also clarified that the matter regarding the resignation of Ramalinga Reddy from the newly formed cabinet is now "settled", adding that the former Karnataka Minister is "his friend".

He also urged the media and political circles not to spread rumours and asserted that all problems within the party were "sorted out".

Addressing reporters, Shivakumar said, "Ramalinga Reddy is my friend. All problems have been sorted out. Don't make up stories. All those stories have become stale. The resignation issue is settled."

Reddy was given the Major and Medium Irrigation portfolio, but as per the reports, he had been aspiring for the Bengaluru development portfolio.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, Reddy clarified that his decision was limited to his ministerial role and not his party membership, asserting that he has "not resigned" from the party.

"I am still in the Congress party; I have not resigned from the party. I have been in the Congress party for the past 53 years. I have handled several responsibilities within the party," Reddy said while showing his resignation letter to the media. **ANI**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, MAHANTHESH M N, S/o Nanjaiah, residing at No. 36/150, 12th Cross, 1st Main, Vidhyamanya Nagar, Ragha vendra Layout, Andrahalli, Bangalore-560091, here by declare that MAHANTHESH M N and M N MAHANTHA, both the names belongs to me only, vide affidavit dated: 06.06.2026 Notary Devaraja E, Bangalore.

I, Jacintha Catherine Jeyakumar, resident 8, Emily Bethel House, 1st B Main Road, Poornapura, Gokula, Bangalore Karnataka 560054, changed my name from Jacintha Catherine Machado to Jacintha Catherine Jeyakumar hereby declare that the names appearing in various documents and records refer to one and same person namely myself.

I, KEHKASHAN KOUSER, C/o Nisar Ahmed, resident of No.28, 4th Main, Shivaji Road Cross, Shivajinagar, HKP Road, Bangalore - 560051, I do hereby declare that I have changed my name from KAHKASHAN KOUSER to KEHKASHAN KOUSER vide Affidavit dated 03.06.2026, sworn before Notary M. Rajendra, Bangalore.

I, Sahana Anil Ragi, D/o Anil, R/o No-22, Hosakeri Galli, Sulebhavi, Hukeri, Belagavi-591103 have changed My Name to Sahana Ragi for all purposes

I, DAKSHAYANI BHAT A, W/o. Shreedhar Heggodu, residing at No. 58, 2nd Cross, R.K Layout, Kempegowda Nagar (K G Nagar), Gavipuram Extension, Bangalore-560019, declaring that both DAKSHAYANI BHAT A and DAKSHAYANI ANANTHAPADMANABHA names are same and belongs to me only, vide affidavit dated 05.06.2026, sworn before notary S.R Paramashivaiah, Bangalore.

I, NARAYAN LAKSHMISH KUBENDRAN LAKSHMI, residing at No. 624, 2nd A Cross, 1th Block, Nagarabhavi 2nd Stage, Bangalore – 560072, have changed my name to LAKSHMI NARAYAN KUBENDRAN, vide affidavit dated 02/06/2026, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, NAZNI BEGUM, W/o Chand Basha, resident of Flat No.104, No.6 M No., 4th Street, Slaughter House Road Cross, Shivajinagar, Bangalore-560051, I do hereby declare that I have changed my name from NAJINI BEGAUM to NAZNI BEGUM vide Affidavit dated 03.06.2026, sworn before Notary M. Rajendra, Bangalore.

I, MONA PURANIK R/o. No. 443, 1st Stage, 6th Phase, 9th Cross, Mahaganapathinagara, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru- 560010 have changed my name to MONA VEERABASAYYA PURANIK vide Affidavit dt. 03.06.2026 sworn before notary Mr. C Srinivas Bengaluru.

I, SUPREETH, Residing at No.818,1st Main, 2nd Cross, 11th Block, BSK 6th Stage, Bengaluru – 560061, have changed my name to SUPREETH HONNAHALLI, vide affidavit dated 16/05/2026, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, TEJASWINI w/o Mr. Gopi, residing at No. 2871, 13th Main, E Block, 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010 have changed my name to LAKSHMIDEVI M S vide affidavit dated 06/06/2026 sworn before notary, D.P Jyothi Bangalore

I, Fahima Jan Also Known As Ayesha Sultana R/o # 28 4 th main road 8 th cross New gurupan palya Bangalore-560029 have changed my name to Fahima Jan

I, Rocha Thomson Norbert, s/o Nobert Francis Rocha, R/o Flat No-GG Shri Shabari South Crest Apt, Block-2 Sy No-44/6A Kyalasanahalli, Srirampura Village Anekal Taluk Bengaluru Rural-560105 have changed My Name to Thomson Rocha for all purposes.

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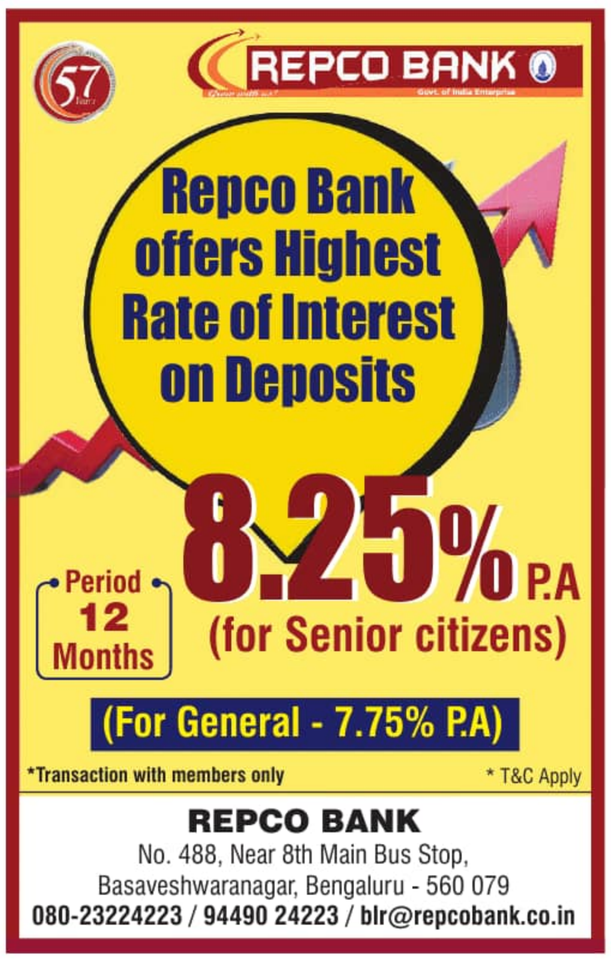
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3 RS, 5 LC seat nominations filed

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday said that nomination papers for three Rajya Sabha and five Legislative Council seats have been filed.

Speaking to reporters here, Shivakumar said, "Today we have filed the nomination papers for all five candidates. Three candidates have been fielded for the Rajya Sabha election and five for the Legislative Council election."

AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge filed nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka at Vidhana Soudha here on Friday.

Shivakumar said that Congress national spokesperson Pawan Khera has been fielded from Karnataka. Along with him, an opportunity has also been given to AICC secretary and youth leader Mansoor Ali Khan.

"For all five Legislative Council seats, including the KPCC president, the opportunity has been given to Congress workers," the chief minister said.

BK Hariprasad, Tippannappa Kamaknoor, PV Mohan, Shivanna Mallvalli and Vinay Karthik were declared as candidates for the Legislative Council elections.

The Congress on Wednesday appointed senior party leader Hariprasad as the new president of its Karnataka unit to succeed Shivakumar.

Responding to a question on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that the change of CM in Karnataka happened against the backdrop of public anger towards Siddaramaiah's government, Shivakumar said, "PM Modi has wished me well. I thank him. I will go and meet him respectfully.

He need not play politics, and we need not play politics. For the welfare of the people of the state, let us all come together and do whatever work needs to be done." **PTI**

Illegal blasting at crusher unit: 4 detained

Anekal Police have registered a case against nine people, including the management and workers of an allegedly illegal mining and blasting operation at an SLV Crusher unit in Thammanaikanahalli village of Anekal taluk after officials found serious violations of safety norms and explosives regulations.

According to a complaint, police received credible information on June 3 that mining and blasting activities were being carried out at Survey No. 177 of Thammanaikanahalli village without proper permission and without mandatory safety precautions.

Acting on the information, the police team, accompanied by staff members, visited the site at around 2.30 pm and conducted an inspection. During the raid, officers allegedly found workers preparing for drilling and blasting operations using machinery such as a an excavator and compressor equipment. Police observed workers using mobile phones while handling blasting-related work and found that the licenced blasting operator was absent from the site.

Police officials also discovered that explosives were not stored in secured containers as required under law. The materials were allegedly kept in open boxes and moved around the worksite. Blasted stones were being loaded into trucks at the time of inspection.

Four persons, including assistant manager Mallikarjuna, supervisor Ramit Singh, writer Maruti, and supervisor Ravi, were taken into custody for questioning. During inquiry, officials learned that explosives were reportedly sourced from a supplier near Sulagiri in Tamil Nadu. **BMB**

Incentive to get enrolled in govt school

In a unique initiative to boost admissions in government schools, a headmaster in Kelur village of Mundargi taluk announced a ₹1,000 fixed deposit in the name of every child enrolled in Class 1. The scheme was introduced by SM Patil, headmaster of the Government Higher Primary School and also a Cluster Resource Person (CRP), who personally donated ₹10,000 to the school in the presence of SDMC members to launch the initiative.

He said additional funds would be provided based on the increase in student enrolment.

Mundargi BEO Gangadhar Annigeri praised the effort, stating that SM Patil has already helped shape the future of thousands of students through dedicated service in government schools. He described the move as a commendable step toward encouraging parents to choose government education for their children. **BMB**

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

WHISPERS FROM WILDERNESS

Our reader shares a striking image of a majestic Sambar deer emerging cautiously from its hideout within dense bushes at the BRT Tiger Reserve. Known for their loud alarm calls that warn other animals of nearby predators, Sambars play a vital role in the forest ecosystem.

The picture was clicked by reader **NJ Ravi Chander**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Hope Farm underpass breakthrough after decade-long land delay ends

Transfer of 24 guntas enables encroachment removal, accelerating underpass construction and easing chronic congestion at Whitefield junction

A key hurdle delaying the Hope Farm Underpass project in Whitefield for nearly a decade has finally been cleared, with Bengaluru East City Corporation taking possession of 24 guntas of government land required for the project. During an inspection, Commissioner D S Ramesh said the transfer of land from the Revenue Department enabled the removal of encroachments and paved the way for the long-pending infrastructure work to move forward. The land, located in Survey No 40/2 of Pattandur Agrahara village, had been at the centre of acquisition and encroachment-related issues for several years, slowing progress on the underpass project. Officials said the property is valued at around ₹40 crore.

The Commissioner noted that sustained coordination between the Revenue Department and civic authorities helped resolve the issue and bring the land under the Corporation's possession.

The Hope Farm junction remains one of the busiest traffic bottlenecks on the Whitefield Road corridor, with motorists routinely facing congestion during peak hours. Officials believe the completion of the underpass will ease traffic movement in the area and improve connectivity for commuters travelling between Whitefield and adjoining localities. Following the acquisition, Ramesh directed officials to speed up construction activities and work towards completing the underpass within the next three to four months. He instructed departments to coordinate on shifting utilities that could affect the project, including water pipelines, electrical cables, optical fibre networks, traffic signals and other public infrastructure. Contractors were asked to maintain construction standards while ensuring progress within the prescribed timeline.

After years of delays, civic authorities have secured crucial public land, allowing long-stalled infrastructure works to progress while strengthening efforts to protect government properties from future encroachments

The Commissioner's inspection also focused on safeguarding government land across city corporation limits. At Channasandra village, he reviewed nearly 34 acres of government gomala land and an additional four acres in Survey No 115. Officials were directed to demarcate boundaries, maintain records and strengthen monitoring mechanisms to prevent encroachments.

Inspections also covered 7,225 square metres of Corporation land near Brigade Lakefront Apartments, where a road project has been proposed. Ramesh stressed that government and civic properties must be protected from unauthorised occupation and reiterated that encroachments would not be allowed to obstruct public infrastructure projects. He said civic agencies would continue efforts to recover public land, make it available for development works and ensure projects are completed within scheduled timelines.

— BMB

With land acquisition issues resolved, authorities push for faster construction of the long-delayed Hope Farm Underpass project

DID YOU KNOW?

The cave lion (Panthera spelaea), one of the largest cats ever to roam the Earth, dominated vast regions stretching from Western Europe across Siberia to North America before becoming extinct around 14,000 years ago. New genome research comparing 12 cave lions with 20 modern lions reveals that cave lions were a distinct evolutionary lineage rather than simply larger Ice Age lions. Scientists found that the two species diverged about 1.7 million years ago, developing unique genetic traits related to growth, vision, brain function and circulation. Larger and more powerfully built than modern lions, cave lions inhabited the cold grasslands and tundras of the mammoth steppe. As apex predators, they hunted reindeer, horses, bison, woolly rhinoceroses and even young or elderly woolly mammoths. While there is no direct evidence that they hunted humans, researchers believe occasional attacks were likely. The study also found that cave lions and modern lions occasionally interbred when climate changes caused their habitats to overlap. Scientists believe rapid warming at the end of the Ice Age, combined with growing human populations, contributed to the extinction of cave lions and many other large prehistoric animals. — Reuters

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Govt calls claims of NEET-UG re-exam paper printing fake

The Claim: Several media reports claimed that the Ministry of Finance's secured printing press could be used to print question papers for the NEET-UG re-examination, linking the ministry directly to the examination process.
Fact: PIB Fact Check dismissed the claim as fake, clarifying that the Ministry of Finance is not printing NEET-UG re-examination question papers and urged reliance on official sources only.

The government on Saturday dismissed media reports claiming that the Ministry of Finance's secured printing press may be used to print question papers for the NEET-UG re-examination, calling the claims fake. In a post on social media platform X, PIB Fact Check said reports circulating in sections of the media linking the Finance Ministry to the printing of NEET-UG re-examination papers were incorrect.

"Several sections of the media are claiming that the NEET-UG re-examination question paper may be printed in the secured printing press of the Ministry of Finance," PIB Fact Check said. Labelling the claim as fake, the government clarified that the Finance Ministry is not involved in printing question papers for the NEET-UG re-examination. "Ministry of Finance is not printing the NEET-UG re-examination question papers," the fact-check unit said. In addition, PIB Fact Check urged people to rely only on official sources for verified information and cautioned against sharing unverified claims. It further asked people to report suspicious content related to the central government to PIB Fact Check through its official channels. The clarification comes amid the circulation of claims regarding arrangements related to the conduct of the NEET-UG re-examination. — IANS

Govt exposes deepfake video targeting army chief Dwivedi

The Claim: Social media posts by Pakistani propaganda accounts claimed that Indian Army chief Upendra Dwivedi said India was funding the Taliban and made remarks about India's engagement with the group.
Fact: The claim is false. PIB Fact Check confirmed the viral video was AI-generated and digitally manipulated. General Dwivedi never made those remarks; the original briefing discussed Operation Sindoor preparedness.

The government on Monday debunked false claims circulating on social media and warned about an AI-generated deepfake video of Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi being shared by Pakistani propaganda accounts to mislead the public. The fact-checking unit of the Press Information Bureau (PIB) highlighted that Pakistani propaganda accounts are using AI to falsely attribute statements about India funding the Taliban. "Pakistani propaganda accounts are circulating a digitally manipulated video falsely claiming that Indian Army chief, General Upendra Dwivedi, made remarks regarding India's engagement with the Taliban," the PIB fact-check said in a statement.

"This claim is fake. Indian Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi did NOT make any such statement. The viral clip has been digitally manipulated to falsely attribute remarks to the Chief of the Army Staff," it added. The manipulated clip alters original footage from a recent press conference held by the Chief of the Army Staff, where he said that 'Operation Sindoor' remains ongoing and that all three Services of the Indian Armed Forces are maintaining a high level of preparedness for any future contingency, including what he described as 'Operation Sindoor 2.0', if the situation demands. — IANS

Debut nations hold glimmer of hope for India

There are 4 debutants in this year's tournament — take a look at how India stacks up in comparison to these teams

A roadside vendor displays FIFA World Cup-themed flags and T-shirts for sale ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, in Dimapur, Nagaland, on Saturday

SS Shreekumar
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There are 48 nations, including four debutantes, in the final rounds of the 2026 FIFA World Cup football which kicks-off on June 11, 2026 and will run right up to July 19, 2026 with Mexico, USA and Canada being the co-hosts.

African nation Cape Verde, Caribbean country Curacao and the two Asian nations Jordan and Uzbekistan are the four countries which have qualified for the first time ever in their history for the final rounds.

From 13 teams in the inaugural tournament way back in 1930, the World Cup expanded to 16 teams. Later, with an eye on votes, the then FIFA President Joao Havelange of Brazil increased it to 24 from 1982 in Spain. His successor Joseph Blatter increased it to 32 from 1998 onwards in France. It stayed that way till the incumbent Gianni Infantino decided to have 48 nations competing from 2026 onwards. Havelange and Blatter did so as they were seeking re-election to the FIFA presidency. Infantino has only followed in their footsteps.

A look at the record of these four nations against India, which of course has never qualified, makes interesting reading. It surely provides a ray of hope.

India and Cape Verde have never met on a football field in any friendly or tournament.

India and Curaçao have played each other only once. Curaçao defeated India 3-1 on June 5, 2019 in the inaugural match of the 47th King's Cup at the Chang Arena in Buriram, Thailand.

India and Jordan haven't met in an official competition. But they played in two official international friendlies with Jordan winning 2-1 in Amman in 2018 and 2-0 in Doha in 2022.

India and Uzbekistan have met seven times and the Uzbeks have won five times with two matches ending in draws.

On April 4, 1997 in the Nehru Cup India and Uzbekistan played out a 2-2 draw in Kochi. Uzbekistan went on to win the Asian Games gold in 1998. But India held them to a goalless draw in an international friendly in Delhi on November 16, 1998. But just three days later, they lost 0-4 in Kolkata.

But in important tournaments like the Asian Cup or Asian Cup qualifiers or the Asian Games, India has not managed to take even a point from the Uzbeks.

The then AIFF President the late Priyaranjan Dasmunshi took the initiative to appoint Uzbekistan's Asian Games gold medal winning team coach Rustam Akramov as the coach of the Indian team.

All this proves that India is not very far away from qualifying for the FIFA World Cup finals in future.

Uzbekistan are the highest ranked team among the four debutants at 50 on the FIFA list. Uzbekistan is the first Central Asian nation to reach the finals. They drew goalless against the United Arab Emirates in the Asian qualifiers on June 5, 2025. On June 10, 2025, they routed Qatar 3-0 as the nation celebrated wildly. Jordan is ranked 63 in the FIFA rankings. In Asian qualifying Jordan were in Group G with Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Pakistan. They won four games on the trot and trounced Pakistan 7-0 on the way. They tied on 13 points with Saudi Arabia and advanced to the crucial third round on goal difference. They were in Group B and faced Asia's top sides like South Korea, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, and Kuwait. But they produced vintage stuff and trounced Oman 3-0 on June 5, 2025 made history by qualifying for the FIFA World Cup for the first time.

Cape Verde is ranked 69 on the FIFA list. They defeated Eswatini 3-0 in October, to book their place at the World Cup. Cape Verde had earlier topped their group at the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, which included Ghana, reaching the quarterfinals where they were beaten on penalties by South Africa. They again topped their group in 2026 World Cup qualifying finishing ahead of the more reputed Cameroon.

Curacao is at No 82 and clinched qualification with a hard-fought 0-0 draw against Jamaica in November under coach Dick Advocaat, the 78-year-old former Netherlands, PSV Eindhoven and Rangers manager.

Put in the right perspective, these results indeed provide Indian football light at the end of a long tunnel. With proper planning and execution, in terms of coaching, diet, friendlies against higher ranked teams, etc. India can realise the same dream and qualify for the final rounds of a FIFA World Cup.

Preliminary group analysis, squads and their chances with FIFA rankings

Group A

Mexico (15), South Africa (60), Korea Republic (25), Czechia (41)

Mexico and Korea Republic should finish among the top two in Group A. Mexico are the obvious favourites to top the group. As co-hosts, they have the advantage of playing at high altitudes and in the intense heat. They should do well in the group and stretch themselves to go a slot or two higher in the knock-outs. Korea Republic has a solid defence led by the gangling Kim Minjae of Bayern Munich and Kim Taehyean of Japanese J-League side Kashima Antlers. A good number of them turn out for clubs in Asia and Europe and have the wherewithal to take the second spot behind Mexico. Czech Republic or Czechia are in the building up process but could cause a surprise or two with South Africa somehow lagging behind in this tough group.

Mexico - El Tri (The Tricolour)

Mexican Alberto Obregon displays a national flag inherited from his father, Fernando Obregon, which has been signed by players of the national football team since the first FIFA World Cup held in Mexico in 1970 --date from which he has been collecting autographs-- at his home in Cuajimalpa, Mexico City, on June 2

Goalkeepers: Raul Rangel (Guadalajara), Guillermo Ochoa (AEL Limassol), Carlos Acevedo (Santos Laguna).
Defenders: Jorge Sanchez (PAOK), Israel Reyes (Club America), Cesar Montes (Lokomotiv Moscow), Johan Vasquez (Genoa), Jesus Gallardo (Toluca), Mateo Chavez (AZ).
Midfielders: Erik Lira (Cruz Azul), Orbelin Pineda (AEK Athens), Alvaro Fidalgo (Real Betis), Roberto Alvarado, Brian Gutierrez, Luis Romo (Guadalajara), Edson Alvarez (West Ham), Obed Vargas (Atletico Madrid), Gilberto Mora (Tijuana), Luis Chavez (Dynamo Moscow).
Forwards: Cesar Huerta (Anderlecht), Alexis Vega (Toluca), Julian Quinones (Al-Qadsiah), Guillermo Martinez (UNAM), Armando Gonzalez (Guadalajara), Santiago Gimenez (AC Milan), Raul Jimenez (Fulham). Manager: Javier Aguirre (Mexico).

South Africa - Bafana Bafana

South Africa's players take part in a training session at Hidalgo Stadium in Pachuca, Mexico on June 3

Goalkeepers: Ronwen Williams (Mamelodi Sundowns), Ricardo Goss (Siwelele FC), Sipho Chaine (Orlando Pirates)
Defenders: Khuliso Mudau (Mamelodi Sundowns), Olwethu Makhanya (Philadelphia Union), Bradley Cross (Kaizer Chiefs), Thabang Matuludi (Polokwane City), Nkosinathi Sibisi (Orlando Pirates), Aubrey Modiba (Mamelodi Sundowns), Khulumani Ndamane (Mamelodi Sundowns), Ime Okon (Hannover 96), Samukele Kabini (Molde FK), Mbekezeli Mbokazi (Chicago Fire)

Midfielders: Teboho Mokoena (Mamelodi Sundowns), Jayden Adams (Mamelodi Sundowns), Thalente Mbatha (Orlando Pirates), Kamogelo Sebelebele (Orlando Pirates), Sphephelo Sithole (CD Tondela)
Forwards: Oswin Appollis (Orlando Pirates), Tshepang Moremi (Orlando Pirates), Evidence Makgopa (Orlando Pirates), Lyle Foster (Burnley), Iqraam Rayners (Mamelodi Sundowns), Relebohile Mofokeng (Orlando Pirates), Themba Zwane (Mamelodi Sundowns), Thapelo Maseko (AEL Limassol). Manager: Hugo Broos (Belgium).

Republic of Korea - Taeguk Warriors, Tigers of Asia

Korea Republic's players arrive at the Guadalajara International Airport Miguel Hidalgo on the outskirts of Guadalajara, Mexico on June 5

Goalkeepers: Song Bum-keun (Jeonbuk), Jo Hyeonwoo (Ulsan), Kim Seung-gyu (FC Tokyo)
Defenders: Jens Castrop (Borussia Monchengladbach), Lee Hanbeom (Midtjylland), Park Jinseob (Zhejiang FC), Lee Kihyuk (Gangwon), Kim Minjae (Bayern Munich), Kim Moonhwan (Daejeon), Kim Tae-hyeon (Kashima Antlers), Lee Taeseok (Austria Wien), Seol Youngwoo (Crvena Zvezda), Cho Yumin (Sharjah
Midfielders: YLee Dong-gyeong (Ulsan), Hwang Heechan (Wolves), Yang Hyun-jun (Celtic), Hwang Inbeom (Feyenoord), Lee Jaesung (FSV Mainz), Kim Jingyu (Jeonbuk), Eom Jisung (Swansea), Bae Junho (Stoke), Lee Kangin (PSG), Paik Seungho (Birmingham)
Forwards: Cho Guesung (Midtjylland), Son Heungmin (LAFC), Oh Hyeongyu (Besiktas). Manager: Hong Myung-bo (Korea Republic).

Czechia - Repre (The Representatives)

Patrik Schick of Czechia scores his team's first goal from the penalty spot during the FIFA World Cup 2026 European Qualifiers KO play-offs match between Czechia and Republic of Ireland at Fortuna Arena on March 26

Goalkeepers: Lukas Hornicek (Braga), Matej Kovar (PSV Eindhoven), Jindrich Stanek (Slavia Prague)
Defenders: Vladimir Coufal (Hoffenheim), David Doudera (Slavia Prague), Tomas Holes (Slavia Prague), Robin Hranac (Hoffenheim), Stepan Chaloupek (Slavia Prague), David Jurasek (Slavia Prague), Ladislav Krejci (Wolverhampton), Jaroslav Zeleny (Sparta Prague), David Zima (Slavia Prague)
Midfielders: Lukas Cerv (Viktoria Plzen), Vladimir Darida (Hradec Kralove), Lukas Provod (Slavia Prague), Michal Sadilek (Slavia Prague), Hugo Sochurek (Sparta Prague), Alexandr Sojka (Viktoria Plzen), Tomas Soucek (West Ham), Pavel Sulc (Olympique Lyonnais), Denis Visinsky (Viktoria Plzen)
Forwards: Adam Hlozek (Hoffenheim), Tomas Chory (Slavia Prague), Mojmir Chytil (Slavia Prague), Jan Kuchta (Sparta Prague), Patrik Schick (Bayer Leverkusen). Manager: Miroslav Koubek (Czechia).

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SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

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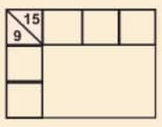
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



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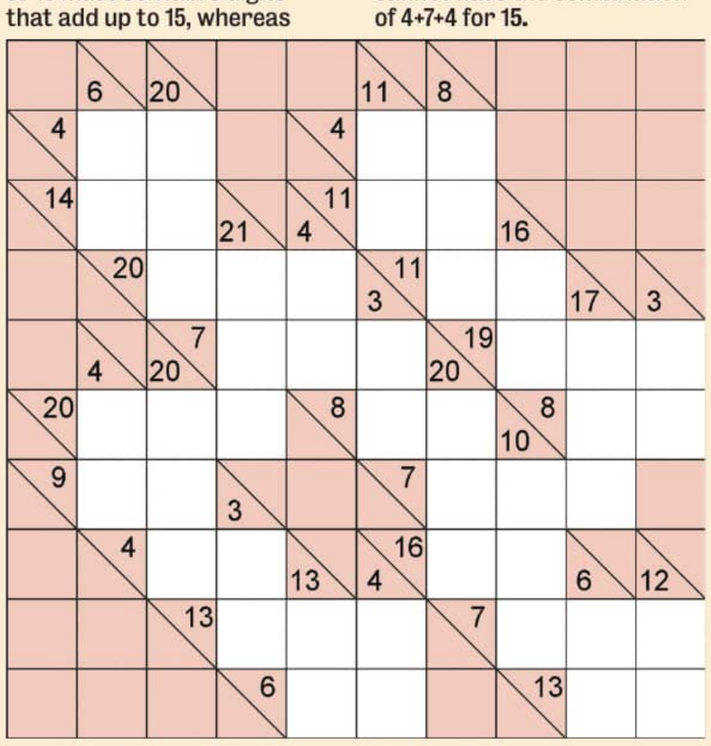

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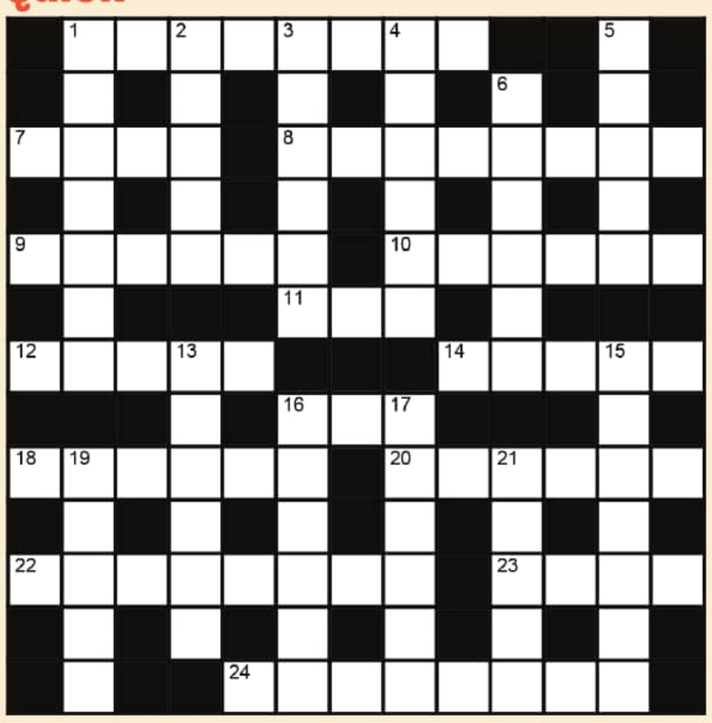


ACROSS

1 An Austrian prince (8)
7 Spiritual teacher (4)
8 National park between Mysore and Ooty (8)
9 Nurture (6)
10 It makes dough rise (6)
11 Express in words (3)
12 An unforeseen obstacle (1,4)
14 Perceive (5)
16 Norse goddess (3)
18 One of the Williams sisters (6)
20 Ex-Mumbai paceman Salil ___ (6)
22 Had a wish for, colloquially speaking? (4,4)
23 Conduit (4)
24 Deletions or eradications (8)

DOWN

1 Containing water or moisture (7)
2 Be important (5)
3 Excludes or prohibits the entry (6)
4 Regal or royal (6)
5 Lucky accident (5)
6 Denunciation or outburst (6)
13 Staves off (6)
15 Chooses (7)
16 More indistinct (6)
17 Beds, strata (6)
19 Significant happening (5)
21 Character actor __ Khan (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: K EQUALS T

XC SJRTW TCCSHKXEB HTBBEK IS, WSK KUS NELS WEYXBZ IS NS.

Linemaro

You are absolutely, astoundingly gorgeous and that is the least interesting thing about you

Mindchow

It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich according to what he is, not according to what he has

Joke of the day

During exams you are permitted to look down for inspiration and up in exasperation, but you are not permitted to look side to side for information

Loop

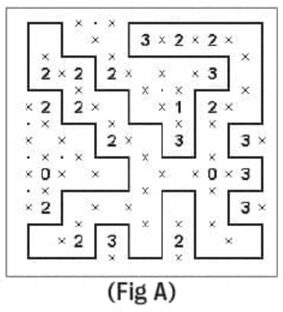
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

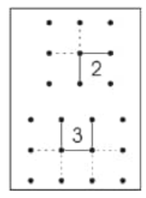
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

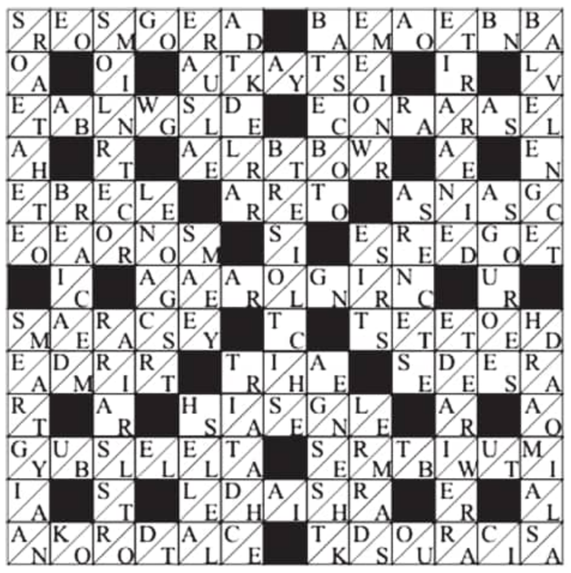


(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed

Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9		H		

ACROSS

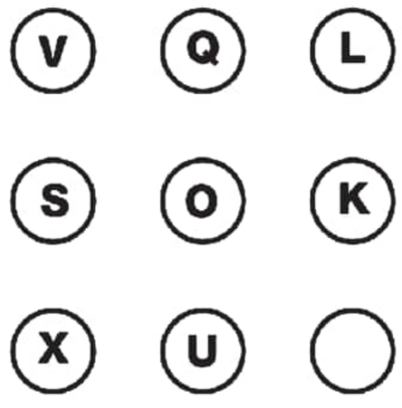
1 Manat; 6 I myth; 7 Incur; 8 Al Gem; 9 Or bah

DOWN

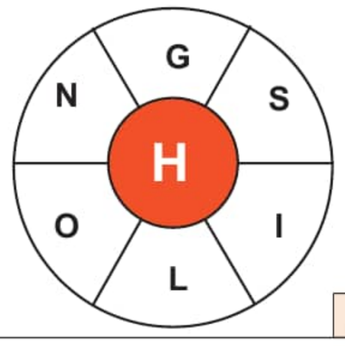
1 Tiara; 2 But HM; 3 A hymn; 4 Mi Goa; 5 In rec

Mensapuzzle

Which letter goes in the empty circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **06** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		9	3		4	8		
1			6		2			9
4				7				6
		7		8		4		
		5				9		
		6		2		5		
8				9				1
5			4		1			3
		1	5		8	2		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

□□□□□□□□ = 9

3 7 8 9

Medium

□□□□□□□ = 6

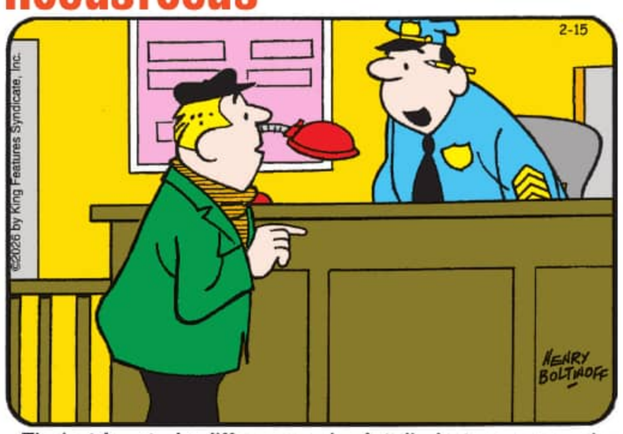
2 2 3 6

Hard

□□□□□□□ = 34

2 6 8 9

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

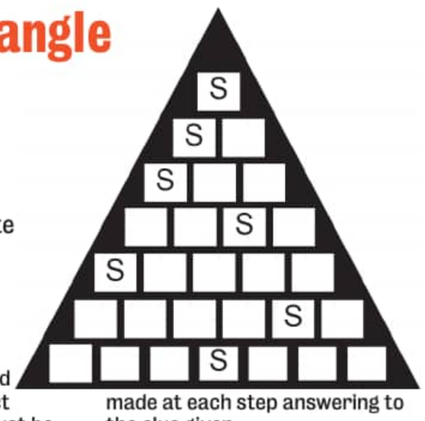
Differences: 1. Badge is lower. 2. Railing is lower. 3. Pocket is added. 4. Desk is not as wide. 5. Elbow patch is added. 6. Lamp is higher.

Riddler

Three travellers register at a hotel and are told that their rooms will cost $10 each so they pay $30. Later the clerk realizes that he made a mistake and should have only charged them $25. He gives a bellboy $5 to return to them but the bellboy is dishonest and gives them each only $1, keeping $2 for himself. So the men actually spent $27 and the bellboy kept $2. What happened to the other dollar of the original $30?

Alpha triangle

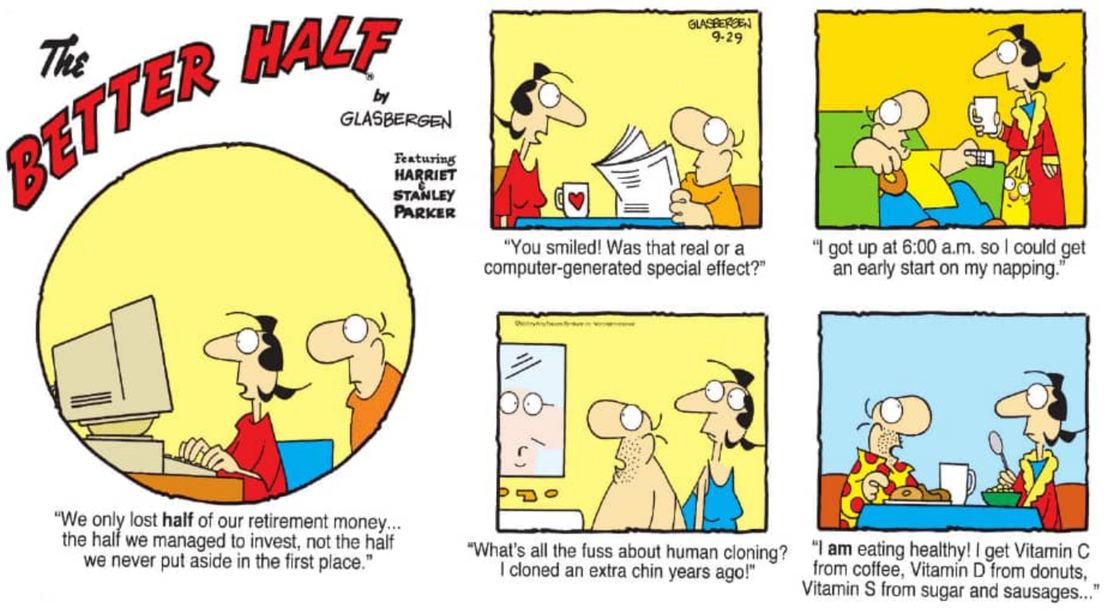
1 Curved letter
2 South East, abbr.
3 Harden
4 Avian abode
5 Beer mug
6 Join up
7 Oscar winner Kate



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"We only lost half of our retirement money... the half we managed to invest, not the half we never put aside in the first place."
GLASBERGEN 9-29
"You smiled! Was that real or a computer-generated special effect?"
"I got up at 6:00 a.m. so I could get an early start on my napping."
"What's all the fuss about human cloning? I cloned an extra chin years ago!"
"I am eating healthy! I get Vitamin C from coffee, Vitamin D from donuts, Vitamin S from sugar and sausages..."

BABY BLUES
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
I'D STILL RATHER HAVE A GYM MEMBERSHIP.
STOP COMPLAINING. THIS IS EFFICIENT!
FLASH GORDON
HAIL, FRIENDS NEW AND OLD!
WELCOME TO SKY CITY!
GOOD NEWS!
DALE ARDEN IS RECEIVING LIFESAVING TREATMENT IN OUR SKY CITY SANATORIUM!
SHAME WE'RE OBLIGED TO HOLD FLASH AND BOK IN CUSTODY.
THEY ARE FUGITIVES, AFTER ALL...
...BUT WE CAN GRANT THEM WORK RELEASE -- IF DR. ZARKOV WILL SPONSOR THEM.
OF COURSE, HE'LL NEED TO PAY HIS OWN WAY...
...SO HE AGREES TO LEND HIS GENIUS TO SPECIAL PROJECT "M."
HANAK DOESN'T LIKE IT.
EVEN BETTER!
FLASH AND BOK PAY FOR THEIR FREEDOM IN OUR FABRICATION LEVEL--
--AS MY MEN KAY AND MUISE KEEP WATCH.
ALL AS I WANTED!
I, PRINCE VULTAN!
AND THE BEST IS YET TO COME.
NEXT: HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

A powerful wave of ambition drives you to learn a new skill or seek higher education. Your career trajectory is climbing, attracting the attention of influential leaders. Financially, avoid impulsive online shopping and focus on saving for a major milestone. Romance is sweet, predictable, and comforting. Keep your joints healthy by introducing gentle stretching or yoga into your morning.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today brings an important reminder that happiness involves far more than financial success alone. Create space for meaningful experiences, emotional balance, and personal joy while continuing to pursue your goals with healthy perspective.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Stepping outside your comfort zone today opens exciting opportunities for growth and discovery. Taking thoughtful risks helps expand your horizons beautifully. Trust that new experiences can bring both success and valuable personal development ahead.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Handling responsibilities personally today gives you valuable insight and stronger understanding of others' efforts. Taking direct involvement improves results while strengthening teamwork. Your hands-on approach helps build respect, awareness, and meaningful professional growth.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Financial matters require extra attention today, encouraging smarter spending habits and practical decisions. Managing resources carefully now creates stability and security later. Balance optimism with realism, and your confidence steadily strengthens over time beautifully.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Work and financial goals deserve attention, but today encourages balancing ambition with enjoyment. Spending time relaxing and reconnecting with friends refreshes your spirit. Personal happiness and meaningful experiences remain just as important as success.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Recent setbacks have revealed just how resilient and capable you truly are. Your ability to recover quickly deserves recognition and pride. Challenges may appear temporarily, but your strength and problem-solving skills remain incredibly impressive.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today focuses entirely on restoring your energy and wellbeing peacefully. Nourishing your body, staying hydrated, and embracing healthy routines help you feel refreshed and productive. Prioritising self-care now supports lasting balance and motivation beautifully.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
An important decision weighs heavily on your mind today, creating unnecessary stress through over thinking. Trust yourself enough to choose confidently and move forward. Decisive action brings relief, clarity, and emotional peace much sooner now.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Reconnecting with loved ones today helps heal feelings of distance or loneliness beautifully. Reaching out sincerely reminds people how much they matter to you. Shared moments, thoughtful gestures, and genuine affection strengthen relationships meaningfully again.

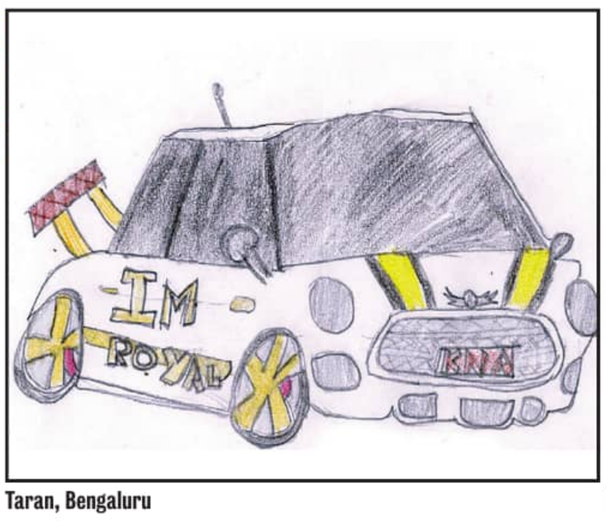
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Supportive company brings comfort and reassurance today, helping you release unnecessary worries about success or finances. Spend time with uplifting people who appreciate your accomplishments and encourage you to relax and trust yourself more.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Someone close may feel insecure because of financial differences today, requiring extra sensitivity from you. Reassure them that emotional connection matters far more than material status. Kindness and inclusion strengthen your bond beautifully now.

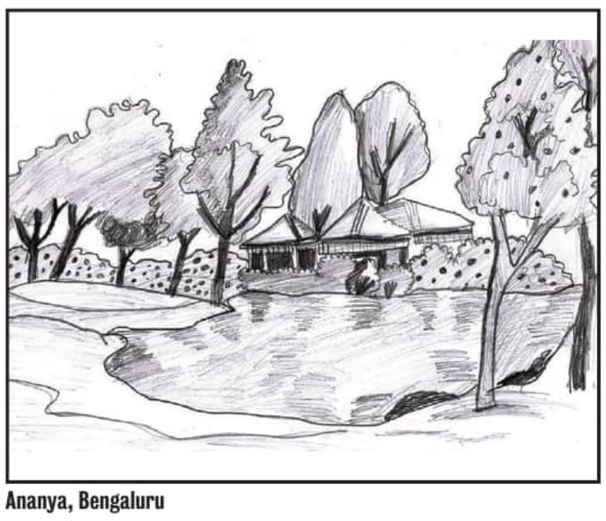
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Clearing away old memories and unnecessary clutter creates emotional freedom and fresh inspiration today. Embrace new experiences confidently while appreciating how far you've come. Letting go of the past makes space for exciting possibilities.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Taran, Bengaluru


Ananya, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER There is no missing dollar from the original $30 because after getting $1 back, the three travelers had paid a total of $27 for their room ($9 each), not $30. Out of that $27, the hotel has $25 and the clerk kept the remaining $2. If you still want to work from the original $30, the travelers have $3, the hotel has $25 and the bellboy has $2. The misleading part is adding the bellboy's $2 to the $27, when in fact it should be subtracted.

FAST FIVE

A	B	H	O	R
I	M	A	G	E
R	U	N	I	C
T	H	Y	M	I
A	T	M	A	N

SOLVE IN 1M
$=56*(1/2*3)*1/3$
$=56*1/2$
$=28$

STRIKE OUT

R	E	M	O	R	A		A	M	O	E	B	A		
O		I		U	K	A	S	E		R		V		
T	A	N	G	L	E		C	O	A	R	S	E		
A		T		E	L	B	O	W		A		N		
T	R	E	E		A	R	T		S	N	A	G		
E	A	R	N	S		I		S	E	D	G	E		
	C		A	A	R	O	N	I	C		R			
M	E	R	C	Y		C		S	T	E	E	D		
A	D	I	T		T	H	E		S	E	E	R		
G	U	L	L	E	T		E	R	B	I	U	M		
R		A		S	I	E	G	E		R		A		
T	H	Y	M	I		S	E	D	G	E				
	I		M	A	G	E								
		A	T	M	A	N								

QUICK

												T		
												N		
											F	E	L	T
										V		R		
									S	E	R	E	N	A
								V		H		E		
							A	N	K	O	L	A		
						S	E	N	S	E				
					D									
				S	A	Y								
							L	E	A	V	E	N		

MENSA PUZZLE
R. Starting on the left in rows, letters ascend in sequence at intervals of 5 for the top row, then 4, then 3.

QUOTE UNCODE
If equal affection cannot be, let the more loving be me.
holing, hosing, sigh, LONGISH, nigh, shin,

BULL'S EYE

6	2	9	3	1	4	8	7	5
1	7	8	6	5	2	3	4	9
4	5	3	8	7	9	1	2	6
3	1	7	9	8	5	4	6	2
2	8	5	1	4	6	9	3	7
9	4	6	7	2	3	5	1	8
8	3	4	2	9	7	6	5	1
5	9	2	4	6	1	7	8	3
7	6	1	5	3	8	2	9	4

SUDOKU

ALPHA TRIANGLE
S, SE, Set, Nest, Stein, Enlist, Winslet.

GO FIGURE
Easy
8 + 3 + 7 − 9 = 9
Medium
3 x 2 x 2 − 6 = 6
Hard
9 − 2 x 6 − 8 = 34

LOOP

KAKURO

Volume No 19, Issue No 023 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/22325 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by Lokesh K.V. at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore–560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru–560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon–responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

 # How to become He-Man
Nicholas Galitzine underwent 5,000-calorie diet and intense training for He-Man role

Matt Damon calls 'The Odyssey' his hardest movie ever

Hollywood actor Matt Damon has described his upcoming epic 'The Odyssey' as the "hardest movie" he has ever worked on, while taking a break from filming reflections to spend time with rescue dogs at the Eastwood Ranch Foundation's Animal Rescue and Adoption Facility in Los Angeles this week.

The Oscar-winning actor spoke about the project in an interview during his visit for the California Adopt-A-Pet Day event on June 6.

Damon, who has five pets at home, spent time with rescue animals while supporting adoption awareness.

The actor also spoke about working with director Christopher Nolan on the film 'The Odyssey'.

"It was by far the hardest movie I've ever made. Chris likes to shoot everything real. So there's no kind of green screen, no faking it, no kind of studio stuff," he said, as quoted by Page Six.

'The Odyssey' is an upcoming mythic action epic film written, directed, and co-produced by Christopher Nolan, based on Homer's ancient Greek poem.

It follows Odysseus on a ten-year journey home to Ithaca after the fall of Troy. Produced by Syncopy and distributed by Universal Pictures, releases July 17, 2026.

The ensemble cast includes Matt Damon as Odysseus, Anne Hathaway as Penelope, Tom Holland as Telemachus, Zendaya as Athena, Charlize Theron as Calypso, Robert Pattinson as Antinous, and Lupita Nyong'o as Helen of Troy. **-ANI**

On a social media break

Taapsee opens up about her digital detox

Taapsee Pannu has opened up about why she decided to slow down on social media. The actress said the constant pressure to follow trends, start conversations, and stay visible online became tiring. She also admitted that the decision affected her brand opportunities, but she chose to protect her peace.

According to Mid-Day, Taapsee spoke about her social media break in an interview with HT City. She said the decision was personal. Taapsee said, "I did not announce that I would go slow on social media; this was something I did for myself, unlike my work. The detox was because of multiple reasons. It felt like you are always in the race of starting trends or participating in trends. It was exhausting. I wanted to live my life and not constantly check social media."

The actress said social media started feeling like a race. She wanted to step away from the pressure to post, react, or join trends all the time. Her comment points to the growing pressure celebrities face to stay active online even when they are not promoting a film or brand.

Mid-Day reported that Taapsee also acknowledged that reducing her social media activity affected her work opportunities with brands. Many endorsements today depend on regular online engagement. Taapsee said authenticity matters more to her than staying active for numbers. **-ETimes**